

## ACT 4

### Scene 1

*Friar Lawrence's cell. Enter Friar Lawrence and Paris.*

FRIAR LAWRENCE

On Thursday, sir? The time is very short.

PARIS

My father Capulet will have it so;  
And I am nothing slow to slack his haste.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

You say you do not know the lady's mind.  
Uneven is the course; I like it not.

PARIS

Immoderately she weeps for Tybalt's death,  
And therefore have I little talked of love;  
For Venus smiles not in a house of tears.  
Now, sir, her father counts it dangerous  
That she do give her sorrow so much sway;  
And in his wisdom, hastes our marriage,  
To stop the inundation of her tears,  
Which, too much minded by herself alone,  
May be put from her by society.  
Now do you know the reason of this haste.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

[*Aside.*] I would I knew not why it should be slowed.—  
Look, sir, here comes the lady toward my cell.

*Enter Juliet.*

PARIS

Happily met, my lady and my wife!

JULIET

That may be, sir, when I may be a wife.

PARIS

That may be, must be, love, on Thursday next.

JULIET

What must be shall be.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

That's a certain text.

PARIS

Come you to make confession to this father?

JULIET

To answer that, I should confess to you.

PARIS

Do not deny to him that you love me.

JULIET

I will confess to you that I love him.

PARIS

So will ye, I am sure, that you love me.

JULIET

If I do so, it will be of more price,  
Being spoke behind your back than to your face.

PARIS

Poor soul, thy face is much abused with tears.

JULIET

The tears have got small victory by that;  
For it was bad enough before their spite.

PARIS

Thou wrong'st it more than tears with that report.

JULIET

That is no slander, sir, which is a truth,  
And what I spake, I spake it to my face.

PARIS

Thy face is mine, and thou hast slandered it.

JULIET

It may be so, for it is not mine own.  
Are you at leisure, holy father, now,  
Or shall I come to you at evening mass?

FRIAR LAWRENCE

My leisure serves me, pensive daughter, now.—  
My lord, we must entreat the time alone.

PARIS

God shield I should disturb devotion!—

Juliet, on Thursday early will I rouse ye,  
Till then, adieu; and keep this holy kiss.

*Exit.*

JULIET

O shut the door, and when thou hast done so,  
Come weep with me, past hope, past cure, past help!

FRIAR LAWRENCE

O Juliet, I already know thy grief;  
It strains me past the compass of my wits.  
I hear thou must, and nothing may prorogue it,  
On Thursday next be married to this County.

JULIET

Tell me not, Friar, that thou hear'st of this,  
Unless thou tell me how I may prevent it.  
If in thy wisdom, thou canst give no help,  
Do thou but call my resolution wise,  
And with this knife I'll help it presently.  
God joined my heart and Romeo's, thou our hands;  
And ere this hand, by thee to Romeo's sealed,  
Shall be the label to another deed,  
Or my true heart with treacherous revolt  
Turn to another, this shall slay them both.<sup>1</sup>  
Therefore, out of thy long-experienced time,  
Give me some present counsel, or behold  
'Twixt my extremes and me this bloody knife  
Shall play the empire<sup>2</sup>, arbitrating that  
Which the commission of thy years and art  
Could to no issue of true honor bring.  
Be not so long to speak. I long to die,  
If what thou speak'st speak not of remedy.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Hold, daughter. I do spy a kind of hope,  
Which craves as desperate an execution  
As that is desperate which we would prevent.  
If, rather than to marry County Paris  
Thou hast the strength of will to slay thyself,

Then is it likely thou wilt undertake  
A thing like death to chide away this shame,  
That cop'st with death himself to scape from it.  
And if thou dar'st, I'll give thee remedy.

JULIET

O, bid me leap, rather than marry Paris,  
From off the battlements of yonder tower,  
Or walk in thievish ways, or bid me lurk  
Where serpents are. Chain me with roaring bears;  
Or hide me nightly in a charnel-house,  
O'er-covered quite with dead men's rattling bones,  
With reeky shanks and yellow chapless skulls.  
Or bid me go into a new-made grave,  
And hide me with a dead man in his shroud;  
Things that, to hear them told, have made me tremble,  
And I will do it without fear or doubt,  
To live an unstained wife to my sweet love.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Hold then. Go home, be merry, give consent  
To marry Paris. Wednesday is tomorrow;  
Tomorrow night look that thou lie alone,  
Let not thy Nurse lie with thee in thy chamber.  
Take thou this vial, being then in bed,  
And this distill'd liquor drink thou off,  
When presently through all thy veins shall run  
A cold and drowsy humor; for no pulse  
Shall keep his native progress, but surcease.  
No warmth, no breath shall testify thou livest,  
The roses in thy lips and cheeks shall fade  
To paly ashes; thy eyes' windows fall,  
Like death when he shuts up the day of life.  
Each part deprived of supple government,  
Shall stiff and stark and cold appear like death.  
And in this borrowed likeness of shrunk death  
Thou shalt continue two and forty hours,  
And then awake as from a pleasant sleep.  
Now when the bridegroom in the morning comes  
To rouse thee from thy bed, there art thou dead.

<sup>1</sup> *And ere . . . them both* And before this hand, which you joined to Romeo's, be given to another (Paris), or my heart revolt against its allegiance to my original love (to Romeo), this (knife) will slay both hand and heart.

<sup>2</sup> *empire* umpire

Then as the manner of our country is,  
In thy best robes, uncovered, on the bier,  
Thou shalt be borne to that same ancient vault  
Where all the kindred of the Capulets lie.  
In the meantime, against thou shalt awake,  
Shall Romeo by my letters know our drift,  
And hither shall he come, and he and I  
Will watch thy waking, and that very night  
Shall Romeo bear thee hence to Mantua.  
And this shall free thee from this present shame,  
If no inconstant toy nor womanish fear  
Abate thy valor in the acting it.

JULIET  
Give me, give me! O tell not me of fear!

FRIAR LAWRENCE  
Hold; get you gone, be strong and prosperous  
In this resolve. I'll send a friar with speed  
To Mantua, with my letters to thy lord.

JULIET  
Love give me strength, and strength shall help afford.  
Farewell, dear father.  
*Exeunt.*

## SCENE 2

*Hall in Capulet's house. Enter Capulet, Lady Capulet,  
Nurse and Servants.*

CAPULET  
So many guests invite as here are writ.  
*Exit first servant.*

Sirrah, go hire me twenty cunning cooks.

SECOND SERVANT  
You shall have none ill, sir; for I'll try if they can lick  
their fingers.

CAPULET  
How canst thou try them so?

SECOND SERVANT  
... [S]ir, 'tis an ill cook that cannot lick his own fingers;

therefore he that cannot lick his fingers goes not with  
me.

CAPULET  
Go, begone.

*Exit Second Servant.*

We shall be much unfurnished for this time.  
What, is my daughter gone to Friar Lawrence?

NURSE  
Ay, forsooth.

CAPULET  
Well, he may chance to do some good on her.  
A peevish self-willed harlotry it is.

*Enter Juliet.*

NURSE  
See where she comes from shrift with merry look.

CAPULET  
How now, my headstrong. Where have you been  
gadding?

JULIET  
Where I have learnt me to repent the sin  
Of disobedient opposition  
To you and your behests; and am enjoined  
By holy Lawrence to fall prostrate here,  
To beg your pardon. Pardon, I beseech you.  
Henceforward I am ever ruled by you.

CAPULET  
Send for the County, go tell him of this.  
I'll have this knot knit up tomorrow morning.

JULIET  
I met the youthful lord at Lawrence' cell,  
And gave him what becoméd love I might,  
Not stepping o'er the bounds of modesty.

CAPULET  
Why, I am glad on't. This is well. Stand up.  
This is as't should be. Let me see the County.  
Ay [ . . . ] Go, I say, and fetch him hither.  
Now afore God, this reverend holy Friar,

All our whole city is much bound to him.

JULIET

Nurse, will you go with me into my closet,  
To help me sort such needful ornaments  
As you think fit to furnish me tomorrow?

LADY CAPULET

No, not till Thursday. There is time enough.

CAPULET

Go, Nurse, go with her. We'll to church tomorrow.

*Exeunt Juliet and Nurse.*

LADY CAPULET

We shall be short in our provision,  
'Tis now near night.

CAPULET

Tush, I will stir about,  
And all things shall be well, I warrant thee, wife.  
Go thou to Juliet, help to deck up her.  
I'll not to bed tonight, let me alone.  
I'll play the housewife for this once.—What, ho!—  
They are all forth: well, I will walk myself  
To County Paris, to prepare him up  
Against tomorrow. My heart is wondrous light  
Since this same wayward girl is so reclaimed.

*Exeunt.*

### SCENE 3

*Juliet's Chamber. Enter Juliet and Nurse.*

JULIET

Ay, those attires are best. But, gentle Nurse,  
I pray thee leave me to myself tonight;  
For I have need of many orisons<sup>3</sup>  
To move the heavens to smile upon my state,  
Which, well thou know'st, is cross and full of sin.

*Enter Lady Capulet.*

LADY CAPULET

What, are you busy, ho? Need you my help?

JULIET

No, madam; we have culled such necessaries  
As are behoveful<sup>4</sup> for our state tomorrow.  
So please you, let me now be left alone,  
And let the nurse this night sit up with you,  
For I am sure you have your hands full all  
In this so sudden business.

LADY CAPULET

Good night.  
Get thee to bed and rest, for thou hast need.

*Exeunt Lady Capulet and Nurse.*

JULIET

Farewell. God knows when we shall meet again.  
I have a faint cold fear thrills through my veins  
That almost freezes up the heat of life.  
I'll call them back again to comfort me.  
Nurse!—What should she do here?  
My dismal scene I needs must act alone.  
Come, vial.  
What if this mixture do not work at all?  
Shall I be married then tomorrow morning?  
No, No! This shall forbid it. Lie thou there.

*Laying down her dagger.*

What if it be a poison, which the Friar  
Subtly hath ministered to have me dead,  
Lest in this marriage he should be dishonored,  
Because he married me before to Romeo?  
I fear it is. And yet methinks it should not,  
For he hath still been tried a holy man.  
How if, when I am laid into the tomb,  
I wake before the time that Romeo  
Come to redeem me? There's a fearful point!  
Shall I not then be stifled in the vault,  
To whose foul mouth no healthsome air breathes in,  
And there die strangled ere my Romeo comes?

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<sup>3</sup> orisons prayers

<sup>4</sup> behoveful needed

Or, if I live, is it not very like,  
The horrible conceit of death and night,  
Together with the terror of the place,  
As in a vault, an ancient receptacle,  
Where for this many hundred years the bones  
Of all my buried ancestors are packed,  
Where bloody Tybalt, yet but green in earth,  
Lies festering in his shroud; where, as they say,  
At some hours in the night spirits resort—  
Alack, alack, is it not like that I,  
So early waking, what with loathsome smells,  
And shrieks like mandrakes torn out of the earth,  
That living mortals, hearing them, run mad.  
O, if I wake, shall I not be distraught,  
Environed with all these hideous fears,  
And madly play with my forefathers' joints?  
And pluck the mangled Tybalt from his shroud?  
And, in this rage, with some great kinsman's bone,  
As with a club, dash out my desperate brains?  
O look, methinks I see my cousin's ghost  
Seeking out Romeo that did spit his body  
Upon a rapier's point. Stay, Tybalt, stay!  
Romeo, Romeo, Romeo, here's drink! I drink to thee.

*Throws herself on the bed.*

## SCENE 4

*Hall in Capulet's House. Enter Lady Capulet and Nurse.*

LADY CAPULET

Hold, take these keys and fetch more spices, Nurse.

NURSE

They call for dates and quinces<sup>5</sup> in the pastry.

*Enter Capulet.*

CAPULET

Come, stir, stir, stir! The second cock hath crowed,  
The curfew bell hath rung, 'tis three o'clock.  
Look to the baked meats, good Angelica;  
Spare not for cost.

NURSE

Go, you cot-quean<sup>6</sup>, go,  
Get you to bed; [. . .] you'll be sick tomorrow  
For this night's watching.

CAPULET

No, not a whit. What! I have watched ere now  
All night for lesser cause, and ne'er been sick.

LADY CAPULET

Ay, you have been a mouse-hunt in your time;  
But I will watch you from such watching now.<sup>7</sup>

*Exeunt Lady Capulet and Nurse.*

CAPULET

A jealous-hood, a jealous-hood<sup>8</sup>!

*Enter Servants, with spits, logs and baskets.*

Now, fellow, what's there?

FIRST SERVANT

Things for the cook, sir; but I know not what.

CAPULET

Make haste, make haste.

*Exit First Servant.*

—Sirrah, fetch drier logs.

Call Peter, he will show thee where they are.

SECOND SERVANT

I have a head, sir, that will find out logs  
And never trouble Peter for the matter.

*Exit.*

<sup>5</sup> *quinces* Quince is a type of fruit, which is similar to the apple. It grows only in western Asia. (Morris, p. 1070)

<sup>6</sup> *cot-quean* one who interferes with household affairs, especially a husband. (Crystal, "cot-queen")

<sup>7</sup> *you have been . . . watching now* Essentially, Lady Capulet is saying to her husband that he oversaw others in his day (in particular, he on watch for immoral activity, as implied by what follows), but now she will be overseeing him.

<sup>8</sup> *jealous-hood* jealousy

CAPULET

[. . .] [W]ell said; a merry whoreson, ha.  
Thou shalt be loggerhead. [. . .] '[T]is day.  
The County will be here with music straight,  
For so he said he would. I hear him near.

*Play music.*

Nurse! Wife! What, ho! What, Nurse, I say!

*Re-enter Nurse.*

Go waken Juliet, go and trim her up.  
I'll go and chat with Paris. Hie, make haste,  
Make haste; the bridegroom he is come already.  
Make haste I say.

*Exeunt.*

## Scene 5

*Juliet's Chamber; Juliet on the bed. Enter Nurse.*

NURSE

Mistress! What, mistress! Juliet! Fast, I warrant her, she.  
Why, lamb, why, lady, fie, you slug-abad!  
Why, love, I say! Madam! Sweetheart! Why, bride!  
What, not a word? You take your pennyworths now.  
Sleep for a week; for the next night, I warrant,  
The County Paris hath set up his rest  
That you shall rest but little. God forgive me!  
[. . .] How sound is she asleep!  
I needs must wake her. Madam, madam, madam!  
Ay, let the County take you in your bed,  
He'll fright you up, [. . .]. Will it not be?  
What, dressed, and in your clothes, and down again?  
I must needs wake you. Lady! Lady! Lady!  
Alas, alas! Help, help! My lady's dead!  
O, well-a-day that ever I was born.  
Some aqua vitae, ho! My lord! My lady!

*Enter Lady Capulet.*

LADY CAPULET

What noise is here?

NURSE

O lamentable day!

LADY CAPULET

What is the matter?

NURSE

Look, look! O heavy day!

LADY CAPULET

O me, O me! My child, my only life.  
Revive, look up, or I will die with thee.  
Help, help! Call help.

Enter Capulet.

CAPULET

For shame, bring Juliet forth, her lord is come.

NURSE

She's dead, deceased, she's dead; alack the day!

LADY CAPULET

Alack the day, she's dead, she's dead, she's dead!

CAPULET

Ha! Let me see her. Out alas! She's cold,  
Her blood is settled and her joints are stiff.  
Life and these lips have long been separated.  
Death lies on her like an untimely frost  
Upon the sweetest flower of all the field.

NURSE

O lamentable day!

LADY CAPULET

O woful time!

CAPULET

Death, that hath ta'en her hence to make me wail,  
Ties up my tongue and will not let me speak.

*Enter Friar Lawrence and Paris with Musicians.*

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Come, is the bride ready to go to church?

CAPULET

Ready to go, but never to return.

O son, the night before thy wedding day

Hath death lain with thy bride. There she lies,  
Flower as she was, deflowered by him.  
Death is my son-in-law, death is my heir;  
My daughter he hath wedded. I will die  
And leave him all; life, living, all is death's.

PARIS

Have I thought long to see this morning's face,  
And doth it give me such a sight as this?

LADY CAPULET

Accursed, unhappy, wretched, hateful day.  
Most miserable hour that e'er time saw  
In lasting labor of his pilgrimage.  
But one, poor one, one poor and loving child,  
But one thing to rejoice and solace in,  
And cruel death hath caught it from my sight.

NURSE

O woe! O woeful, woeful, woeful day.  
Most lamentable day, most woeful day  
That ever, ever, I did yet behold!  
O day, O day, O day, O hateful day.  
Never was seen so black a day as this.  
O woeful day, O woeful day.

PARIS

Beguiled, divorced, wronged, spited, slain.  
Most detestable death, by thee beguiled,  
By cruel, cruel thee quite overthrown.  
O love! O life! Not life, but love in death!

CAPULET

Despised, distressed, hated, martyred, killed.  
Uncomfortable time, why cam'st thou now  
To murder, murder our solemnity?  
O child! O child! My soul, and not my child,  
Dead art thou. Alack, my child is dead,  
And with my child my joys are buried.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Peace, ho, for shame. Confusion's cure lives not  
In these confusions. Heaven and yourself  
Had part in this fair maid, now heaven hath all,  
And all the better is it for the maid.

Your part in her you could not keep from death,  
But heaven keeps his part in eternal life.  
The most you sought was her promotion,  
For 'twas your heaven she should be advanced,  
And weep ye now, seeing she is advanced  
Above the clouds, as high as heaven itself?  
O, in this love, you love your child so ill  
That you run mad, seeing that she is well.  
She's not well married that lives married long,  
But she's best married that dies married young.  
Dry up your tears, and stick your rosemary  
On this fair corse, and, as the custom is,  
And in her best array bear her to church;  
For though fond nature bids us all lament,  
Yet nature's tears are reason's merriment.

CAPULET

All things that we ordained festival  
Turn from their office to black funeral:  
Our instruments to melancholy bells,  
Our wedding cheer to a sad burial feast;  
Our solemn hymns to sullen dirges change;  
Our bridal flowers serve for a buried corse,  
And all things change them to the contrary.

FRIAR LAWRENCE

Sir, go you in, and, madam, go with him,  
And go, Sir Paris, everyone prepare  
To follow this fair corse unto her grave.  
The heavens do lower upon you for some ill;  
Move them no more by crossing their high will.

*Exeunt Capulet, Lady Capulet, Paris and Friar.*

FIRST MUSICIAN

[. . .] [W]e may put up our pipes and be gone.

NURSE

Honest good fellows, ah, put up, put up,  
For well you know this is a pitiful case.

FIRST MUSICIAN

Ay, by my troth, the case may be amended.

*Exit Nurse. Enter Peter.*

PETER  
Musicians, O, musicians, 'Heart's ease,' 'Heart's ease', O,  
and you  
will have me live, play 'Heart's ease.'<sup>9</sup>

FIRST MUSICIAN  
Why 'Heart's ease'?

PETER  
O musicians, because my heart itself plays 'My heart is  
full'. O play me some merry dump to comfort me.

FIRST MUSICIAN  
Not a dump we, 'tis no time to play now.

PETER  
You will not then?

FIRST MUSICIAN  
No.

PETER  
I will then give it you soundly.

FIRST MUSICIAN  
What will you give us?

PETER  
No money . . . but the gleek! I will give you the minstrel.

FIRST MUSICIAN  
Then will I give you the serving-creature.

PETER  
Then will I lay the serving-creature's dagger on your  
pate. I will  
carry no crotchets. I'll *re* you, I'll *fa*<sup>10</sup> you. Do you note<sup>11</sup>  
me?

FIRST MUSICIAN  
And you *re* us and *fa* us, you note us.

SECOND MUSICIAN  
Pray you put up your dagger, and put out your wit.

PETER  
Then have at you with my wit. I will dry-beat you with  
an iron wit, and put up my iron dagger. Answer me like  
men.

*When griping griefs the heart doth wound,  
And doleful dumps the mind oppress,  
Then music with her silver sound—*

Why *silver sound*? Why *music with her silver sound*?  
What say you, Simon Catling?

FIRST MUSICIAN  
[. . .] [S]ir, because silver hath a sweet sound.

PETER  
Prates. What say you, Hugh Rebeck?

SECOND MUSICIAN  
I say *silver sound* because musicians sound for silver.

PETER  
Prates too! What say you, James Soundpost?

THIRD MUSICIAN  
[. . .] I know not what to say.

PETER  
O, [. . .] you are the singer. I will say for you. It is  
*music with her silver sound* because musicians have no  
gold for  
sounding.

*Then music with her silver sound  
With speedy help doth lend redress.*

*Exit.*

FIRST MUSICIAN  
What a pestilent knave is this same!

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<sup>9</sup> "Heart's Ease" is a song about enjoying life hedonistically, or in some ways stoically—to take our lot in life as it comes. It begins, "Sing care away with sport and play; / Pastime is all our pleasure." It is obvious that the juxtaposition of singing of the song and what has just occurred is quite strange and thought-provoking. Quoted from the poem which appears on 'Romeo and Juliet' Navigator. "Note to Romeo and Juliet." [https://shakespeare-navigators.ewu.edu/romeo/Note\\_Romeo\\_and\\_Juliet\\_4\\_5\\_102.html](https://shakespeare-navigators.ewu.edu/romeo/Note_Romeo_and_Juliet_4_5_102.html). Accessed on January 27, 2025.

<sup>10</sup> *fa* . . . *re* musical notes

<sup>11</sup> *note* play on the word *note*, meaning a "musical note" and "take note"



SECOND MUSICIAN

Hang him, Jack. Come, we'll in here, tarry for the  
mourners, and stay dinner.

*Exeunt.*